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## Y Day Camp: A Lasting Tradition of Good Times

Dave Eitland

Director of Marketing

"I can't believe it has been almost 15 years since I was in the YMCA's Leader's Club. Leader's Club helped me to see at a young age that helping people was a great thing to do with my life. I have carried it into my professional career and my work with seniors in our region," said a Y Leader's Club alum at a recent professional senior advocates meeting.

For nearly a quarter of a century, the Grand Traverse Bay YMCA has offered Y Day Camp at its facility just off of South Airport Drive in Traverse City. "We have been very fortunate with our location being next to the Boardman Nature Preserve. This Garfield Township 40 acre woods provides us with a river, trails, and the great outdoors to do our Y Day Camps," according to Tom Van Deinse, CEO. "Not only has this been an ideal setting for our camps in teaching the Y's four core values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility to our campers, but also for 24 years we have trained hundreds of people who have served on our camp staff to be productive leaders and living a life of service in our community."

And the tradition continues this 2009 Y Day Camp season.

"When kids experience Y Day Camp, they experience something new every day in a truly beautiful setting with a great group of qualified camp staff," according to Molly Brown, Y Director of Day Care and Camps. "The staff are positive mentors that provide confidence-building activities in a place where our campers can build long lasting friendships. With six different camps, most spanning 12 weeks this summer, our staff will provide opportunities for character development, challenges, creative programs, field trips, and a whole lot of fun."

In addition to Traditional Y Day Camp, this year there are two new camps being offered. "K-Camp" is offered exclusively for kids entering Kindergarten, with age appropriate activities similar to Y Traditional Day Camp. "Y Arts Camp" will feature 4 weeks of activities for campers entering grades 4 – 6 allowing them to experience different mediums as an introductory and interest level in the arts.

As in past years, the Y will continue to offer Y Leaders Club for teens and Y Sports Cam for grades 4 – 6. Y Young Explorers Camp will be offered again for campers aged 3 ½ to 4 years, but this summer will be held at the air conditioned Y Child Care Center at 1100 Woodmere, Suite B in Traverse City.

Katie Winslow, Traverse City, will serve as the 2009 Y Supervisor of Day Camp. She brings 10 years experience in working with children and supervising staffs. Winslow has her bachelor degree from Grand Valley State University and her Masters Certification in Elementary Education. She will have 23 on her camp staff this year.

"There is still plenty of room for campers to register to experience Y Day Camps," said Winslow.

“Although there have been three times the requests as last year, scholarships are still available for camp and all other YMCA programs,” says Van Deinse. “These scholarships are made possible by the many individuals, families, and businesses that contribute to the YMCA annual through its Invest in Youth Appeal.”

For more information about the YMCA, click on the Y’s website at [www.gtbayymca.org](http://www.gtbayymca.org) . For information on day camp opportunities call the Y Day Camp Office at 933-9622 or get information at the Camp’s blog at [dcgtbayymca.blogspot.com](http://dcgtbayymca.blogspot.com) .